

## X-Rays Beamed on Prisoners To Test Sterility by Radiation

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28 (AP)

The Atomic Energy Commission beamed X-rays into the testicles of 131 prisoners in Oregon and Washington in the 1960's to test if heavy radiation could make them sterile, the Energy Research and Development Administration confirms.

The prisoners gave written consent to the experiments and later underwent vasectomies after the radiation had damaged their reproductive systems to the extent that they could have fathered deformed children, a spokesman for the Government agency said.

The energy research unit took over last year the research functions of the now defunct Atomic Energy Commission.

The radiation made some of the prisoners sterile for as long as five years, the research agency said, but medical examinations and studies of tissue samples showed that they all recovered their fertility.

There is no evidence that the radiation produced cancer in any of the prisoners, the agency said. But the Federal Government is not certain because no comprehensive follow-up check of the prisoners has been made.

The agency wants to do a follow-up study but the state authorities and some of the prisoners are reluctant to cooperate because of possible embarrassment, it said.